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ABSTRACT

The "Graduate Information Booklet" provides directory-type information on Montgomery County (Maryland) services for disabled students who are graduating from high school. The first section on practical information explains armed services registration, acquisition of school records, personal identification cards, social security cards, reduced-fare public transportation cards, taxi service for persons with physical handicaps, food stamps, child care, consumer protection, free clothing, and library services. Other sections list employment services, vocational rehabilitation services, career counseling programs, emergency assistance, crisis intervention, mental health resources, support groups, recreational programs, and sources of further education and training. The "Answers to Frequently Asked Questions..." leaflet explains the Montgomery County Public Schools' requirements for earning a diploma; the requirements for earning a certificate; the role of the Admission, Review and Dismissal Committee in gearing a special education student toward a certificate rather than a diploma; due process rights; the role of transition planning; and post-graduation options. (JDD)

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Graduate Information Booklet, Spring 1986

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions about Graduation and Transition from School for Special Education Students, Spring 1989

Margit Meissner
Ellen Patton

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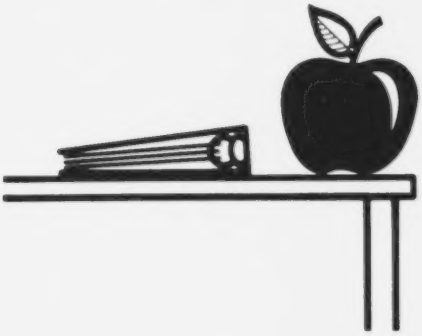
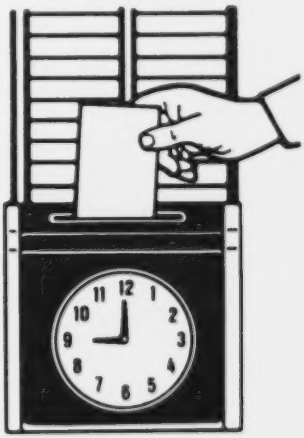
Montgomery County Public Schools



GRADUATE INFORMATION BOOKLET



Spring 1986

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Dear Student:

Soon you will be graduating from the public schools. As you move from school to the adult world, you will frequently be looking for information on such subjects as further education, work opportunities, recreation or health and safety. This booklet will help you find the information you need.

Good luck to you and best wishes for the future.

Sincerely

Wilmer S. Cody

Wilmer S. Cody
Superintendent of Schools

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PRACTICAL INFORMATION

IMPORTANT: Armed Services Registration

At age 18, all young men must register at the nearest post office. Persons with disabilities may be represented by a parent or guardian.

IMPORTANT: School Records

You may need your school records to get needed services as an adult. Your records will be kept at your school for two years after you graduate. At the end of that time, the records are destroyed. Ask your principal if you wish to see your records. You can get your psychological reports from the Diagnostic and Professional Support Team (279-3385) with a request signed by you or your parent.

Personal Identification

It is a good idea to carry an I.D. card at all times with your name, address, phone number and medical information (medications, allergies, etc.). The card should also give the name, address and phone number of a person to contact in case of emergency.

You may wish to get a medical bracelet or necklace from Medic Alert if you have a special problem (such as epilepsy, etc.). This information can be engraved on the bracelet or necklace. Drug stores may carry such items. For information, write to:

Medic Alert Foundation
P.O. Box 1009
Turlock, Calif. 95380

Age of Majority Card

Any person who is 18 can get this card. You need to show a certified copy of your birth certificate and one other form of identification. It costs $5.00. Apply at:

Motor Vehicles Administration
15 Metropolitan Grove Road
Gaithersburg, Md. 20877
948-3177

Social Security Cards

To get a Social Security card, bring a certified copy of your birth certificate and one other form of identification to the Social Security Administration. There are two locations:

200A Monroe Street
Rockville, Md. 20850

or

962 Wayne Ave.
Silver Spring, Md. 20910

953-3600

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Benefits

SSI benefits are available to you if you qualify. For information on whether or not you qualify, call your nearest Social Security office. (See addresses above.)

Metro Cards

Persons with disabilities may get reduced-fare Metro cards. You need a note from a doctor stating that you have a handicapping condition, and you also need a completed application. Call 637-1245 for an application. Applications are accepted at 600 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., during regular business hours or by appointment at two Montgomery County libraries:

Aspen Hill Public Library
4407 Aspen Hill Road
Rockville, Md. 20850

or

Silver Spring Center
8641 Colesville Road
Silver Spring, Md. 20910

Metrorail cards are also available at Metro stops and other locations. You must have a Metro ID if you want to buy special farecards.

Taxi Service for Persons with Physical Handicaps

For persons with physical disabilities, there is 24-hour taxi service with wheelchair-accessible vehicles. Reservations must be made 24 hours in advance. For more information call

TAXI ACCESS
Silver Spring Taxi
912 Philadelphia Avenue
Silver Spring, Md. 20910
589-4800

To call a special taxi:

589-3808

Food Stamps

You may be able to get food stamps. For information call:

Department of Social Services
5630 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Md. 20850
468-4394

Child Care

This agency can help find a place that takes care of young children while parents work.

Child Care Connection
50 Monroe Street, B-6
Rockville, Md. 20850
279-1276

Consumer Protection

A. Purchases
If a store sells you something that does not work, take it back. If the people in the store will not help you, people at this agency will talk to the store owner for you or tell you what to do.

Consumer Complaints and Protection
100 Maryland Avenue—Room 330
Rockville, Md. 20850
251-7373

B. Housing
If you have a problem with your landlord, this agency will try to help you.

Housing and Community Development Department
100 Maryland Avenue—Room 200
Rockville, Md. 20850
251-2577

Clothing

If you do not have money to buy clothes, you can get clothes free. The store is open from 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. every Thursday.

Women's Interfaith Services
1633 E. Gude Drive
Rockville, Md. 20850
424-3796

Library Services

Montgomery County has many libraries where you can get a wide range of information, and borrow books, tapes, record players, and cassette players. You must have a library card to take anything home.

Montgomery County Libraries
Special Needs Library
6400 Democracy Blvd.
Bethesda, Md. 20817
493-2555 (TDD) 493-2554

HELP WITH JOBS

IMPORTANT: Employment Records

To fill out job applications and to help you get a job, keep a list of all your past summer or afterschool jobs. Include: name(s) of employer(s), address(es), phone number(s), name of supervisor(s) and job description(s). You should ask for letters of reference from teachers and past employers to use as you look for work. Also, keep written records of the schools you attended, the addresses, dates, and the courses you took.

Employment Services

This agency gives free help with finding a job, job testing, counseling and training, and job market information. This is also the place where you can file claims for unemployment insurance. **REGISTER NOW. IT IS FREE AND OPEN TO YOU!**

Employment Security Administration
Wheaton Plaza Shopping Center
Lower Level South
Wheaton, Md. 20902
949-5300

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)

This agency helps persons with physical, mental, or emotional disabilities get job training and work. DVR counselors may also help you obtain services from other agencies, such as Welfare, Mental Health, etc. Call the DVR office and ask for an application. The application can be mailed to you, or it can be filled out by the secretary over the phone if you ask.

If your zip code is:

20012 Takoma Park	20860 Sandy Springs
20702 Ashton	20895 Kensington
20730 Burtonsville	20901 Wheaton
20766 Silver Spring	20902 Wheaton
20783 Takoma Park	20903 Wheaton
20795 Silver Spring	20904 Wheaton
20832 Olney	20906 Wheaton

Call the **Wheaton DVR Office**

Wheaton Plaza—North Office Bldg.
2730 University Blvd.
Wheaton, Md. 20902
949-3750

If your zip code is not one of the ones above, call the Rockville DVR office.

Rockville DVR Office
6110 Executive Blvd.
Rockville, Md. 20833
881-1770

Your application will be given to a counselor. The counselor will write to you. (This can take two to four weeks.) It is then up to you to call that counselor for an appointment for an interview. You will need a doctor's report and a psychological evaluation by a school or a private psychologist. for the interviews. The doctor's and the psychologists's report **cannot be over one year old.**

Career Counseling for Women

This service helps women decide what jobs they might like best and how to do career planning.

New Phase Career Center
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Md. 20850
279-1800

Job Training and Tryout (JT&T)

This agency teaches young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 who have completed Level 4 or 5 special education programs how to find and keep a job in the community.

11600 Nebel Street, Suite 114
Rockville, Md. 20852
468-0913

LEAP (Life Experiences Activities Program)

This program helps persons with disabilities (ages 16 and over) learn work behaviors and how to get and keep a job in the community. Call for information about the cost.

8719 Colesville Road, #305
Silver Spring, MD 20910
589-1777

Montgomery County Conservation Corps

In this program you work in nature, such as building small bridges, landscaping, and planting trees or doing trail work in parks. You also learn all about nature conservation and you may get job counseling and support.

600 East Gude Drive
Rockville, Md. 20850
294-8720

GENERAL INFORMATION

For information on all types of public and private community programs in Montgomery County call:

Montgomery County Information and Referral
50 Monroe Street
Rockville, Md. 20850
279-1900

For national information about disabilities and resources, legal rights, employment, and support groups and for lists of local, state, and national organizations and newsletters, call:

National Information Center for Handicapped Children and Youth
Box 1492
Washington, D.C. 20013
528-8480

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Emergency Assistance

Dial 911 for FIRE, AMBULANCE, and POLICE

Explain the emergency and give your name and address (spell out, if possible) and the number of the telephone you are calling from.

If you need a doctor for an emergency, call the emergency room at the nearest hospital. The emergency rooms are always open.

Holy Cross Hospital
1500 Forest Glen Road
Silver Spring, Md. 20910
565-0100

Montgomery General Hospital
18101 Prince Phillip Drive
Olney, Md. 20832
774-7800

Suburban Hospital
8699 Old Georgetown Road
Bethesda, Md. 20014
530-3100

Washington Adventist Hospital
7600 Carroll Ave.
Takoma Park, Md. 20012
891-7600

Shady Grove Adventist Hospital
9901 Medical Center Drive
Rockville, Md. 20850
279-6000

Crisis Intervention

HOTLINE – 949-6603

Call this number if you have a serious problem and need to talk to someone about it. You may also go to this center if you want

counseling or need help finding a place to sleep. It is available to all county residents 24-hours a day.

Community Crisis Center
4910 Auburn Ave.
Bethesda, Md. 20014
656-9161

Sexual Abuse

If you have been raped or sexually abused, you can telephone anytime, day or night. The people here will help you go to a doctor, tell the police, and talk to a lawyer.

Sexual Assault, Community Crisis Center
751 Rockville Pike, Suite 26-B
Rockville, Md. 20850
656-9420

Community Mental Health Resources

These programs help people with mental problems. They are open to persons of all ages. Costs depend on services and situation.

Mental Health Services
Division of Montgomery County Health Department
2350 Research Blvd.
Rockville, Md. 20850
840-2333

Psychiatric Institute Foundation
14901 Broschart Road
Rockville, Md. 20850
251-4676

Community Psychiatric Clinic, Inc.
2424 Reedie Drive
Wheaton, Md. 20902
933-2402

Jewish Social Services
6123 Montrose Road
Rockville, Md. 20852
881-3700

Family Life Center of Montgomery County
Box 582
Olney, Md. 20832
924-4515

Family Service of Montgomery County, Inc.
1 West Deer Park Road
Gaithersburg, Md. 20877
840-2000

IPA Family Education Center – Bethesda Christian Church
6050 Wisconsin Ave.
Chevy Chase, Md. 20815
652-6611

Pastoral Counseling and Consultation Centers
of Greater Washington
Centers in Bethesda, Rockville, and Silver Spring
281-1870

SUPPORT GROUPS

These organizations offer a lot of different services, most of which are free. You may find them useful for information, support, and guidance.

National Association of Deaf
814 Thayer Avenue
Silver Spring, Md. 20910
587-1788

Information and counseling for families with deaf or hearing impaired children, newsletter, book store on sign language, and office skills training program.

Community Services for Autistic Adults and Children
751 Twinbrook Parkway
Rockville, Md. 20851
762-1650

Information and referral services; residential, vocational, and community services for adolescents and adults.

Mental Health Association of Montgomery County
10920 Connecticut Avenue
Kensington, Md. 20895
949-1255

Information and referral on community mental health resources; PALS program providing one-to-one relationships for children with a caring volunteer, Montgomery County HOTLINE, 24-hour telephone counseling, and information and referral service (949-6603).

Montgomery County Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities
Box 623
Rockville, Md. 20851
933-1076

Information on services for children with learning disabilities, parent advisory service on educational problems, parent groups, tutor referral service, and speakers bureau, monthly meetings.

Association for Learning Disabled Adults (ALDA)
P.O. Box 9722
Friendship Heights
Washington, D.C. 20016

Information and support for adults with learning disabilities: monthly meetings.

Montgomery County Association for Hearing Impaired Children
Box 7375
Silver Spring, Md. 20907
869-4018

Information and referral, sign language and cued speech classes, library, and monthly meetings.

Montgomery County Association for Retarded Citizens
11600 Nebel Street
Rockville, Md. 20852
984-5792

Information and counseling, parent advisory service on educational problems, parent training in educational advocacy for children with any disability (Project TEAM), parent-to-parent support, discussion groups, workshops, and monthly meetings.

Montgomery County Council of
Parent Teacher Associations (MCCPTA)
Special Needs Committee

Many schools have on their PTA Executive Board a special needs chairperson who provides information and support to parents. Call your school PTA president or the MCCPTA office (983-0679, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.)

Services to Handicapped Individuals
Montgomery County Department of Family Resources
102 Monroe Street
Rockville, Md. 20850
279-1246

Information and referral, and technical assistance on accessibility and nondiscrimination mandates.

United Cerebral Palsy of Montgomery County
6110 Executive Boulevard
Rockville, Md. 20852
468-1676

Information and referral service, summer day camp for children, and Saturday morning programs.

Volunteers for the Visually Handicapped
4405 East-West Highway
Bethesda, Md. 20814
652-4347

Information and referral, short-term counseling, aids and appliances shop, volunteer readers, and mobility training.

RECREATION

The Montgomery County Recreation Department offers a range of activities: swimming, social clubs, sports, music arts, dance, camps, etc. Seasonal brochures are available. You must register for all activities. Call for information about costs. For individuals with disabilities, there is a Therapeutic Recreation Program located at 12210 Bushey Drive, Silver Spring, Md. 20902.

Montgomery County Recreation Department
12210 Bushey Drive
Silver Spring, Md. 20902
468-4217

For general information, call 468-4203
For Therapeutic Program information, call 468-4560.

The Red Cross offers health and safety classes in home nursing, mother and baby care, mother's aide, first aid, swimming, and water safety. Call for information concerning eligibility and costs.

Montgomery County Chapter, American Red Cross
2020 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Md. 20815
588-2515

The Special Olympics, Montgomery County Public Schools offer year-round sporting programs for children and young adults, ages six years and up who are or have been in special education programs in MCPS.

Lake Normandy Center
Falls Road
Rockville, Md. 20850
299-3141

Friendship Club—Jewish Community Center offers Sunday activities and field trips for ages 14 to 30.

6125 Montrose Road
Rockville, Md. 20852
881-0100, Extension 24 or 38

The JFK Social Club is for working handicapped adults 18 years and older.

9701 East Bexhill Drive
Kensington, Md. 20795
949-3092

L.E.A.P. Social Awareness Program offers social and recreational activities.

914 Silver Spring Avenue
Silver Spring, Md. 20910
589-3559

Riding for the Handicapped Foundation provides therapeutic horseback riding lessons to handicapped children and adults.

26315 Haines Road
Clarksburg, Md. 20871
253-4669

The United Cerebral Palsy Young Adults Program provides, social, recreational, and informational programs for persons 15 years old and up. There are socialization programs for ages 18 and older.

The United Cerebral Palsy of Montgomery County
6110 Executive Boulevard, Suite 222
Rockville, Md. 20852
468-1676

FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Montgomery College
Learning Center
Rockville Campus
279-5058

Program:
The college offers developmental courses in reading, writing, and math. All developmental courses are noncredit. Handicapped students are tested to see which courses they need. A counseling support group for LD students meets twice a week. IEPs are developed for LD students.

Eligibility:
Students must have a high school diploma. Students are eligible if they wish to enroll in at least one course at Montgomery College and are in need of some special service due to a learning disability.

Cost:
Each year one third of the students receive some financial aid. When filling out a general application, a financial aid application should be filled out as well.

Montgomery County Public Schools—Adult Education

Connecticut Park Center
12518 Greenly Drive
Silver Spring, Md. 20906
942-8304

The Department of Adult Education has dozens of courses in all kinds of subjects from automotives and electronics to welding and zoology. The Adult Education bulletin is mailed to all residents in Montgomery County four times a year.

Other Education/Training
For information about other post secondary training at colleges and technical schools, please call your local public library reference librarian.

Department of Special Education and Related Services
Office of Special and Alternative Education
Hiawatha B. Fountain, Associate Superintendent

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES
Office of Special and Alternative Education

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions About

Graduation and Transition from School

for Special Education Students

DIPLOMA/CERTIFICATE

Which students will earn a diploma?

Any student entering grade 9 for the first time during or after the 1985-86 school year must meet the following criteria to receive a diploma:

Enrollment: Completes satisfactorily four years of approved study beyond grade 8.

Credit: Earns 22 credits beyond grade 8 which must include: 4 English, 3 mathematics, 2 science, 3 social studies, 1 fine arts, 1 practical arts, 1 physical education, and 2 semesters physical activity or an additional semester of elective physical education. At least four of these credits must be earned after completion of grade 11.

Competency:* Demonstrates competencies in the following five areas:

Basic Skills - passes the Maryland Functional Tests in reading, math, and writing.

Citizenship Skills - passes the Maryland Test of Citizenship Skills

World of Work, Life Skills, Arts/Physical Education - participates in the approved instructional programs covering these areas.

Which students will earn a certificate?

Any special education student who does not meet the requirements for a diploma but who meets the following standards:

1) Is enrolled in an education program for at least four years beyond grade eight, or its age equivalent, and is determined by a special committee, the Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) committee, to have developed appropriate skills to enter the world of work, act responsibly as a citizen, and enjoy a fulfilling life.

   or

2) Has been enrolled in an education program for four years beyond grade eight, or its age equivalent, and has reached age 21.

*The **Declared Competency Index,** a publication of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), 1980, lists the goals, competencies, and objectives for each area.

Are there any special education students who are exempt from the certificate option?

No. Any special education student (Levels 1 - 6) regardless of handicap can earn a certificate if he/she is unable to meet diploma requirements. The decision to pursue the certificate, however, must be made by an ARD committee.

What if the parents disagree with the ARD committee's recommendations?

Parents can use their due process rights and file an appeal. For further information on due process rights, contact the Diagnostic and Professional Support Team, 279-3385. These same rights apply to students aged 18 and over who have reached the age of majority.

What is considered "world of work?"

According to MSDE, "world of work" shall include but not be limited to gainful employment, work activity centers, sheltered workshops, and supported employment.

What does the certificate look like?

The certificate looks like the diploma, with appropriate wording changes.

Maryland High School Certificate

This is to certify that

has completed in a satisfactory manner at the

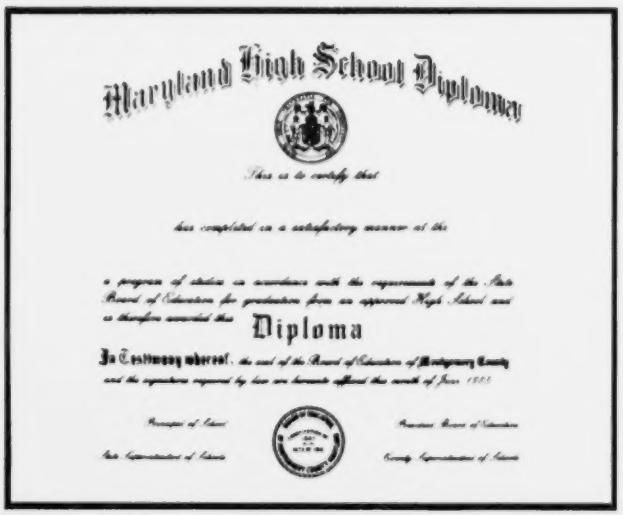
a program of studies in accordance with the requirements of the State Board of Education and is therefore awarded this

Certificate

In Testimony whereof, the seal of the Board of Education of Montgomery County and the signatures required by law are hereunto affixed this month of June 19

Principal of School | President, Board of Education

Chief Administrator of Schools | County Superintendent of Schools


Maryland High School Diploma

This is to certify that

has completed in a satisfactory manner at the

a program of studies in accordance with the requirements of the State Board of Education for graduation from an approved High School and is therefore awarded this

Diploma

In Testimony whereof, the seal of the Board of Education of Montgomery County and the signatures required by law are hereunto affixed this month of June 19

Principal of School | President, Board of Education

Chief Administrator of Schools | County Superintendent of Schools

GRADUATION

Does the awarding of a certificate mean graduation for a student?

Yes. A student who earns a certificate is considered to be a graduate and receives the certificate during the school's graduation ceremony.

What if a student who is working toward a diploma appears unlikely to meet the criteria by the anticipated graduation date?

As the date of anticipated graduation nears, the ARD committee must meet and make the following decisions:

1) Should the student continue to pursue a diploma or is a certificate the more appropriate option?
2) Should the anticipated date of graduation be changed (after summer school, additional semester, additional year)?
3) What programming and accommodations will assist the student in meeting the diploma or certificate requirements by the revised anticipated graduation date?

DECISION-MAKING

How does the ARD committee decide whether to gear the student's program toward a certificate rather than a diploma?

Because the special education student population is diverse, there are no absolutes for decision-making. However, the ARD committee should consider the following items to determine what is in the student's best interest:

1) REALISTIC EXIT OPTIONS
   What are the goals for this student after graduation?
   Do student, staff, and parent agree that the goals are realistic?
   What courses, programming and activities will assist the student to reach the goals?
2) PROJECT BASIC TESTS
   How many times has the student taken the test(s)?
   Have the test scores increased/decreased/ remained the same?
   Is it likely that continued remediation would result in the student passing the tests?
   Would continued remediation be done at the expense of the student acquiring other skills the ARD committee feels are essential?
3) CREDIT-BEARING COURSES
   How has the student fared in credit-bearing courses?
   Is the student unable to meet the objectives of the course despite accommodations and individualized goal-setting?
   Would the student's needs best be served by providing alternative programming?

When should the ARD committee make the certificate decision?

Discussion should begin during the middle school years and be continued annually. The ARD committee can exempt a student from Project Basic testing and other diploma requirements at any time.

For some severely handicapped students, the decision to exempt them from Project Basic testing and credit-bearing courses can be made at an early date.

For most students, Project Basic test results should be used as a guide. Logical times to make decisions about continued testing are:

- at the end of grade six in preparation for the diagnostic tests in grade seven
- at the end of grade eight in preparation for the customary ninth grade testing
- at the end of grade nine after the first or second administration of the tests
- at the end of grade ten when a student has taken the test several times with appropriate accommodations and after appropriate remediation

Student success in diploma-required courses also can serve as a guide for diploma/certificate decision-making. If a decision has not been made by the end of grade ten, the ARD committee must consider whether continued remediation and Project Basic testing efforts, and/or repetition of failed courses are in the best interest of the student. A student who has been exempted from the requirement of passing the Project Basic tests for graduation can still take individual tests if the ARD committee feels this is appropriate for the student.

Exit goals, course requirements, programming needs, and Project Basic test results should be reconsidered annually based upon student progress.

PROGRAMMING

How will the program for a certificate student differ from that for a diploma student?

The overall program for each student will be based on assessment information, career plans, and exit goals. Upon graduation, many special education students will go directly to work and should have the skills needed to be employed successfully. Other students will pursue postsecondary education or training; they, in turn, should be prepared for postsecondary education, just like nonhandicapped students.

The certificate student may continue in some credit-bearing courses, but attainment of course objectives will not be judged by MSDE and MCPS diploma course criteria. The certificate student's program is likely to include academic courses in English and reading, math, science, and social studies with emphasis on functional objectives; prevocational and vocational exploration; and in-school and community work training. The student's program will focus on courses and experiences that best prepare the student for work and responsible citizenship.

TRANSITION PLANNING

What is transition planning?

Transition planning is a process that includes:

- Identifying the student's goals after high school
- Determining a program to prepare the student to attain his or her goals
- Documenting the student's anticipated adult services needs
- Linking the student and parent with potential adult service providers

When does transition planning begin?

Transition planning is an on-going process that becomes a part of the annual Individualized Education Program (IEP) review process. A logical starting point occurs during grade eight when the initial four-year guidance plan is developed and discussed at the annual review meeting. It is essential that the parent and the student take part in the annual review discussion and decision-making. Discussion of the following topics assures transition-related planning:

- Past history
- Current year's progress
- Relevant test results
- Social adjustment
- Health-related issues
- Career/work-related skills and interests
- Identification of realistic career/vocational goals and exit options
- Determination of steps/programming required to assure attainment of exit options
- IEP goals
- academic and prevocational/vocational programming
- assessment needed for decision-making
- credit issues where applicable
- anticipated graduation date
- school/home/community support system and ancillary services

At the end of grade 11 or a year before the student's planned graduation, anticipated adult services are identified. This documentation may be done during the annual review meeting or at a separate meeting, when anticipated services and follow-up responsibilites are identified. During the final school year all follow up is completed.

What is the Exit ARD?

In the spring before the student graduates, the student's progress and graduation status are reviewed by the school's ARD committee with the student and parent. Anticipated adult services are reviewed. This process assures that students and parents have all necessary information required to make a smooth transition from MCPS into the community.

POST GRADUATION OPTIONS

How should students complete application questions about high school graduation?

Both students who earn a diploma and those who earn a certificate answer "yes" when asked if they graduated from high school. Most applications do not ask whether a student earned a certificate or a diploma. If asked specifically, students who earned a certificate should say they earned a certificate, indicating they completed an approved high school program of studies.

Can a student who received a certificate earn a high school diploma after age 21?

Yes. Students may enroll in GED programs and receive a Maryland High School Diploma.

Can a student who graduates with a certificate enroll in college?

Yes. A person 18 years or older may apply for admission to Montgomery College. The student is placed on academic restriction until completion of 12 credit hours with a C or better average. The restriction normally carries a limitation to register for no more than 2 courses per semester. A student who successfully completes a two year community college program can transfer to a four year college.

What further educational opportunities exist for students who receive a certificate?

Graduates may attend adult education classes offered by MCPS and Montgomery College in its Continuing Education division. There also are trade schools and other training and vocational programs where graduates may obtain specific skills needed for employment.

How do potential employers feel about hiring students who have earned a certificate rather than a diploma?

Employers realize that persons with varying degrees of academic skills can be valued and effective workers. Employers have said they want workers who are reliable, can get along with others, and have good work habits. Most of them realize that neither the diploma nor the certificate measures these attributes.

Many entry level jobs in both the private sector and in the federal, state, and local government do not require a diploma. Armed Forces requirements vary. The Army and Navy accept individuals with a certificate, while the Marines and Air Force require a diploma. All branches require a qualifying exam.

In a recently completed study by the Greater Washington Research Center, employers stated they consider the applicant's motivation, attitude, appearance, and work-readiness more important than academic preparation.

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